EMPOWERING AND EQUIPPING INNER CITY YOUTH

FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

FOR THE 21ST CENTURY THROUGH

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL AWARENESS

J. Kendall Guy, DMin

BA, Oakwood College, 1984
MDiv, Andrews University Theological Seminary, 1988·

MENTORS
Dr. Jacqueline Grant
Dr. R. Dwight Hopkins

A FINAL DOCUMENT SUBMITTED TO
THE DOCTORAL STUDIES COMMITTEE
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
DAYTON, OHIO
May, 1996

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

EMPOWERING AND EQUIPPING INNER CITY YOUTH FOR COMMUNITY
LEADERSHIP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY THROUGH CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL
AWARENESS

by

J. Kendall Guy

United Theological Seminary, 1996


Mentors

Dr. Jacqueline Grant
Dr. Dwight Hopkins

This model was designed for multi-cultural inner city youth at the New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church in Harlem, New York. Nine structured dialogue sessions were developed to build character, self-esteem and promote self-motivation. With emphasis on Black and Womanist Theology, the sessions were built upon the realities of life and biblical principles relating to God, self and community. The results of the model were evaluated by surveys and interviews which revealed that character, self-image and self-motivation were affected as youth were prepared for community leadership through cultural and spiritual awareness.

# INTRODUCTION

This project was born out of a personal as well as professional need and desire. Personally speaking, I was deeply troubled when I saw the way inner city youth were growing up. From personal interviews with them, it was apparent that many young people had no plan or purpose for their lives. Many of them did not even understand who they were. I recognize that during the adolescent years many youth have not given much thought to their future. However, what was more disturbing and alarming was that many of them did not care about their future. They were concerned with living for the moment. As long as they had money, new clothes, and fancy European automobiles, nothing else seemed to matter. As I spoke with young people in the New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church, of which I currently Pastor, I was told by some that it is not worth making future plans because we may not be around. Based on the Christian belief that Christ is coming back for His people, I thought that they were making reference to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. I soon realized that this was not the case at all and in fact, they were making reference to the conditions of the world as it relates to gang violence, drug use, domestic violence, the increased use of guns on the streets and even suicide. As I thought about what I was hearing, I realized that these young people were frightened of the future and saw little or no hope in sight. I began to search myself to see how I could help them.

Inner city youth are different from rural youth. The differences can be seen in the way they dress, walk and talk. Their churches, schools and homes are different. Some inner city youth have to share a single bedroom with other siblings while their suburban friends

1

have their own bedrooms. The standards of living, principles and values are different between inner city youth and rural youth. However, inner city youth should not feel disadvantaged but should feel encouraged to meet the challenges set before them. While the lifestyles may be different, the opportunities are the same. Therefore, the personal goals that have been set for this model are: to play a more active role in the community, to assist inner city youth in their personal development, to create a climate where youth will want to turn dreams into realities, to challenge youth to be positive forces in their communities.

My interests and concern for inner city youth probably emerge out of the realization that my own experience is somewhat different from those of today's inner city youth. Many inner city youth come out of unstable homes and environments. My early experiences in life emerge from a more stable home and community environment. This is not to say that we lived without problems, but whether at school or at home, we were constantly taught that Christ was to be the center of our lives. While mother encouraged us to live Christ-like lives and treat all people with the same respect that we would expect, father constantly encouraged us to be leaders and not followers. He also encouraged us to be the best that we could be. Positive values and practical principles for living were enforced in the home. I thank God for my early nurturing. It enabled me to go through life's ups and downs, peaks and valleys, as well as failures and successes. Throughout my journey in this life, I have come to know without a doubt that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil 4:13)."

From a professional point of view, it is my desire to see inner city youth be all that they can be. For a number of years, churches of different denominations have operated

viable youth programs. However, the New Hope Church had not operated a productive program for youth in its twelve year history. While there was an active Adventist Youth Society within the church, it did not meet the needs of those outside the church. It should be stated that the youth who were a part of the church were the very ones who said the church had nothing going on for them. Therefore, the church, from a professional perspective had a need to do something for inner city youth, both members and non-members alike.

The desire for a viable youth program was present in the church. When I became the Pastor of New Hope, I was presented with a list of 82 names of young people between the ages of 13 - 21. At no time have I ever seen them all. I discovered that many of them simply stopped coming to church for various reasons. Upon inquiring what types of programs were designed for the youth, I soon discovered that not much was happening. The youth felt that the church was out of touch with their needs. Although the young people had no problems with the spiritual programs designed for them, they felt that their social and emotional needs were being neglected. As a church, we began to discuss what could be done to help not only the youth in our church, but those in the community as well. At New Hope, the value of youth is recognized. The operation of a youth program presents many new challenges to our church. In the chapters that follow, you will come to understand the challenges that we face as a church and a society. The church must take some of the responsibility for equipping our youth for the future. I believe that the New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church and other churches with a burden for our youth are ready to meet the responsibilities of EMPOWERING AND EQUIPPING INNER CITY YOUTH FOR

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY THROUGH CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL AWARENESS.

**PURPOSE OF PROJECT**

When we look ahead, we see the youth becoming our future. As we prepare ourselves for the transition our youth will be making, there are some questions that begin to surface. One might ask, are the youth of today ready for tomorrow? By that I mean to say, are they equipped? Do they have the skills necessary for leadership service? Are they emotionally, socially, spiritually, and even politically stable? While it is clear that each of these areas can be problematic, the point is our youth must know who they are and on what principles they stand. Another question that might come forth is, are the youth of today interested in achieving success or becoming successful leaders in their society? Do they have a desire to become successful individuals or are they content with simply surviving at whatever the cost may be?

In many of our inner cities across America, scores of our youth have become content with the idea of just making it. They just want to get by for the moment. This attitude comes as a result of several factors: 1) The economic status of their family. In some instances, the family has only what it needs to get by. 2) Peer pressure: in this case, the friends may say just do enough to get by. 3) A lack of steady employment. 4) A lack of self-determination. 5) a lack of character development. 6) The plight of low self-esteem. 7) A loss of positive values.

An interview of a group of teenage boys between the ages of 13 - 15 was conducted by a local news reporter in New York City. It just so happened that these boys were on the street playing and making drug deals during school hours. The reporter asked why they were not in school. As one boy reached for his cellular phone, apparently to make another drug deal, the other boy proceeded to respond to the reporter's question. His response was, "why go to school when I can make all kinds of money out here." He proceeded to say, "school can't give me the money I need to make it though the day, I just want to make it." Unfortunately, there are many youth who express the same views in different ways. Life must be more than a game of survival. If in fact the future of our communities lie in the hands of our youth, then we must no longer accept or tolerate their survival tactics of the day, we must begin to help them live productive lives. Having talked with many young people, it should be stated that not all young people are in the survival mode. There are some who realize their potential and have set goals for their lives. They must be encouraged to continue their quest for success. Unfortunately, the scales weigh in favor of those who seek to survive as opposed to those who seek more productive lifestyles among the youth of our society. It is for this reason that more individuals, community organizations, and churches need to get involved in the development of our youth. While there are in fact many individuals and social groups making tremendous strides to assist in the development of our youth, there can never be enough youth programs.

I realize that the task set before me presents numerous obstacles and challenges. However, along with the obstacles and challenges, there are rewards. While this work is

being done to complete Doctoral Studies at the United Theological Seminary, the purpose of the project is three dimensional.

While it is true that there are many people ( youth in particular) who know what they want to do with themselves, it is also true that many have no idea of what to do with themselves. In working with inner city youth, I have discovered that many have no desire to really be productive citizens. This is due in part to what I referred to earlier as the survival mode. It is therefore, the first purpose of this project to create a desire within the hearts and minds of inner city youth to be successful, community leaders empowered and equipped for community leadership.

Secondly, the project seeks to reveal a better way of living. The youth of our society are our greatest resource. They have a lot of potential. They simply need help in cultivating their abilities.

Finally, this project will help youth to live with purpose and plan. There are some youth who feel they have no purpose due to their present conditions. Perhaps they have no positive role models or maybe the economic situation of their family presents little or no hope. This project can give those who feel purposeless, a sense of purpose and a plan for achieving their goals.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF PROJECT**

The difference or uniqueness of this project is that it intends on helping youth to see and understand who they are before they reach a crisis state. What is unique about this project is the fact that it will be the only one of its kind in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. By implementing this project, the young people will have a better opportunity of becoming

empowered and equipped for community leadership in the 21st century through spiritual and cultural awareness. For too long we have waited until their social problems overwhelmed them before help was offered.

# CHAPTER ONE
# THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

**THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION**

Within the African-American community there is an abundance of cultural wealth. While the African American heritage is rich, according to the social standards of society, we are still poor. Even though we have over come obstacles such as slavery and the right to vote, there are still social issues that must be dealt with such as high unemployment rates among inner-city youth. However, amid the numerous things that have set us back, the church has endeavored to keep hope alive in our hearts and propel us forward.

The church as played a major role in our development as a people. For the African American Community, the church has been its heart and soul. When we look at the church, we see that it is God's primary representative here on earth. The word of God in the new testament is abundantly clear on what the church's mission ought to be. Matthew in his gospel says:

> "And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14

The church seems to have a responsibility of proclaiming the good news of salvation. The gospel according to Mark also shares something with us concerning the churches mission. Mark says in chapter 16:15 : "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Throughout scripture, the churches' responsibility is noted. The gospel (Good news of Christ) must be heard by all people regardless of sex, race, creed, and age. It is clearly understood that this gospel should be transferred from the church to the community.

The centrality of the gospel as well as the church should always be Christ. Christ must be seen as the center of all. As we look at the gospel and the church, we cannot view them in their totality without looking at Christ. The three are inseparable. Christ has given

8

the gospel to the church. It is therefore the churches mission to proclaim this gospel to a world with various needs.

Although the Bible speaks of the "good news of salvation", for one reason or another, many of God's people do not appear to receive it. The greatest resource of our society, our youth, seems to have a problem in comprehending the "good news". Perhaps it has been presented negatively to them, maybe they really do not care about it. There is also the possibility that they genuinely do not understand it. In any event, to many young people today, anything associated with religion only means a bunch of do's and don'ts. It has been stated that "the more fundamental a church and the greater the number of standards that constitutes its religious life-style, the more likely it is that its youth will rebel."[1]

As I read through the gospels, it appears to me that Christ was concerned with the physical, spiritual, mental, emotional and social needs of people. Christ was very concerned about the youth. When children were brought to be blessed by Christ and the disciples rebuked them, Jesus said, "suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come unto me; for such is the kingdom of heaven." While there is plenty of good news for the youth of today, it must also be recognized that they are hearing and seeing things in the world that cloud their senses. As a result, the good news in which the Bible speaks of is not affecting the youth of our society as it ought. However, there is a direct linkage between the mission of the church, Christ and the Church, and the youth which constitutes a premise on which a biblical and theological foundation will be built for a multi-cultural module for youth ministries for the 21st century.

## THE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

Over the years, society's youth have been given a great deal of attention. Youth oriented programs for African American youth can be dated back to the post civil war years.

---

[1] Dudley, Roger, Why Teenagers Reject Religion and What to do About It. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Association, 1978) p8.

The concern for its youth, prompted the black church to foster and promote educational programs through its organized Sunday school programs. During the 1800's various programs directed toward their personal and spiritual development emerged from the black church. The Christian Endeavor Movement organized in 1881 in Portland, Maine by Francis E. Clark became the model for youth work in the black church. In 1893 the Christian Endeavor Society was organized in the African Methodist Episcopal Church by H. R. Stitt. As early as 1885, the Baptist Young People's Union of the Southern Baptist convention had united with the Christian Endeavor Societies.

Although these Christian education programs were necessary and have significantly and positively affected youth work today, there were problems. According to Charles R. Foster and Grant S. Shockley the initial youth programs were influenced by white Protestant church models. Foster and Shockley concurred that "these approaches tended to be inadequate in meeting the religious needs of black church youth. They also have proven to be inadequate in responding to the recent voracious changes in black churches and communities."[2]

Several factors caused the black church to become more involved in the social development of its youth. Two that stand out concern themselves with the needs of black youth. First, they needed a structure that could identify with their social, economic, spiritual and cultural needs. The Euro-centric models did not meet these needs. The old way of doing youth work among blacks required a reformation. The black church would prove to be a powerful force and influence in affecting changes that would meet the needs of black youth. The other factor that caused the black church to get more involved with its youth was the relocation of black families. During the late 1800's and early 1900's, scores of black families relocated to urban cities of the north and west seeking a better quality of life. This mass movement caused many problems for the black church. Sociologist E. Franklin Frazier

---

[2] Foster, Charles R. and Grant S. Shockley, <u>Working with Black Youth</u> (Nashville, TN. Abingdon Press) p.13.

substantiates this point by saying that "this migration created several problems for black churches and communities: the difficulty of finding housing for migrating families, the loss of disciplinary control by working mothers, marital separations and youth involvement in delinquent behavior and crime."[3]

The situation that the black church now found itself in had significant implications. "In effect many working and middle class black people preferred the Baptist or African Methodist churches, while significant numbers of professional and affluent blacks often held membership in congregations related to predominantly white (Protestant or Catholic) denominations."[4] Those who are historians and sociologists of the black church agree that "storefront churches arose in part to accommodate the social and religious needs of those black immigrants who failed to either find a black congregation or to find acceptance in one or another of the established black churches."[5] The fact that new black churches arose to accommodate black immigrants is significant in that they recognized their role in meeting the existing needs of their people.

While the church sought to meet the social and economic needs of the people as a result of the migration, classism and secularism developed in the church. This had an adverse effect upon the youth. The participation and attendance by youth at youth programs gradually declined. According to Foster and Shockley, the churches response to youth needs became "mixed" and "modest." "The concern of black churches and community leaders for black youth is revealed more in conference reports and research studies that focus on black youth than in the churches' programmatic response."[6] Although there are many social institutions that are meeting the needs of youth, the church cannot afford to be less programmatic now than it was in the early beginnings of youth ministry. The black church still has a significant role to play in the liberation of our people and our youth in particular.

---

[3] Ibid
[4] Ibid
[5] Ibid
[6] Ibid

If our church does little or nothing to meet the needs of our people, then we continue to allow oppression.

As mentioned previously, there was a decline in the attendance and participation of youth programs among black youth in the black church. Charles H. Wesley and William E. Carrington researched the attitudes of black youth towards the church. In his study, <u>The Religious Attitudes of Negro Youth,</u> Wesley found that:

- "many attended church service because they liked them.
- some attended because there was no where else to go.
- the majority attended because of parental influence.
- black church youth tended to be religiously conservative.
- few preferred the ministry as a profession; and
- youth universally demanded a more practical Christianity."[7]

Carrington in his study, <u>Negro Youth and the Religious Education Program of the Church,</u> discovered that church programs for black youth tended to: - be the second most important division of the church, - be branches of adult controlled organizations sometimes giving rise to radical left-wing groups of youth seeking self-determination, - involved a trend toward cooperation with community based character building organizations such as boy scouts and girl scouts, - construe recreation for youth in narrowly defined terms, - imitate adult church activity with little youth activity, - be guided by poorly trained adult teachers; and - lack youth oriented management methods.

With a clearer understanding of the attitudes of black youth, the black church must assume its rightful place in their hearts and minds. Historically the church provided

---

[7] Ibid

programs designed to educate our youth. The times may be different but the mission to see our youth excel and reach their full potential is not. The church's involvement with youth is critical to their future. Today's church must be open to create and develop a youth ministry that reaches their level, identifies with their experiences, and understands their situations in life. Inner city youth approaching the Twenty-first Century are looking for this type of model of youth ministry.

## THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

We are told in sacred scripture that we should teach our children to love God totally and completely. As a spiritual foundation for life, young people need to be taught to begin everything with God. God should be the starting point in their lives.

Coupled with teaching is training. Scripture admonishes us to train our children. A distinction between teaching and training will be drawn later in this section. However, the fact of the matter is training is necessary for empowering and equipping inner city youth for community leadership. Because God addresses the teaching and training of youth, the biblical paragons that address my context are found in Deuteronomy 6: 5-7, Proverbs 22:6 and Joel 2:28.

> And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shalt talk to them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. Deuteronomy 6:6-7

> Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6

> And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions... Joel 2:28

There is no substitute for a good education. When we think about the biblical character of Moses, we are able to see how important training up our youth is. Moses was called by God to deliver the children of Israel from under the oppression of the Egyptians. Prior to this, Moses was born when Pharaoh decreed all male born babies to be destroyed. However, when Moses was born, he spent the first few days of his early life in a basket made from bulrushes and slime. We are told that when the daughter of Pharaoh came to wash herself, she discovered the baby in the basket and later made provisions for the child's every need. The needs included an education. Moses was trained in the kings palace and received royal tutoring. As time moved on, the achievements in the life of Moses can be attributed to the fact that Moses was highly educated and called by God. The training of our youth inspires them to have a love for truth, sincerity and knowledge. Our youth ought to be trained to diligence and to industry in their affairs. In a world where people seem to care only about self, the youth of society should be trained to be compassionate and benevolent. It has been stated that: "if we do not train the children in truth and righteousness, it would be better that we should not train them at all."[8] Dr. Chalanmers says,

> "You can not begin too early. God should be spoken of to the very youngest, and the name of Jesus Christ familiarized to them. Every association of reverence and love that the tone and style of the parents can attach to the business of religion should be established in them. Their consciences are wonderfully soon at work"[9]

It is very important that a distinction between teaching and training be made. In the New Testament a companion text to Proverbs 22:6 is Ephesians 6:4 which says; "And ye fathers,

---

[8] Excell, Joseph, The Biblical Illustrator, (Grand Rapids Michigan, Baker Book House) p575.

[9] Ibid

provoke not your children to wrath but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Training is not merely leading. Along with what should be taught in the home, it is the feeling of this writer that the church can and should bear some of the responsibility of training and teaching. In Ephesians 6:4, the word admonition refers to "teaching" and the word nurture refers to "training." The priest Eli was a good admonisher. He was always admonishing his sons, but Eli was a poor trainer. Abraham on the other hand was both an admonisher and trainer. Abraham commanded his house after him. How else will the youth of this generation have dreams and visions of tomorrow if they are not admonished (taught) and nurtured (trained) today? The prophet Joel declared;

> "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and you daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions" Joel 2:28.

Acts chapter 2:16-17 says virtually the same thing:

> "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days saith God, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams." Acts 2:16,17

Within some of our urban communities, it seems as though dreams are dying or are already dead. To many youth today, the world does not appear to be sympathetic to their dreams. Sad but true many will see their dreams and visions only through a thick fog. When we consider life in the city, dreams and visions seem to be covered with dust, dirt and pollution in all forms. In over-crowded apartment houses, there does not appear to be much room for poetry, art, and the sciences of our society. Life seems visionless at times. However, the

prophet Joel was correct concerning the ideas of dreams and visions. They are the salt of all life. Ultimately, life will be weighed by the ideals which people stand by in truth no matter how difficult they may be. Consider for a moment the life of a nation. The study of that life is history. When we look at countries such as Rome, Israel and Ancient Greece, we find that the dreams and visions were everything to these nations histories which do not die. History is in fact but a science of regulated enthusiasms and the results thereof. Hope makes history a progress instead of a vicious cycle. What is certain of history is when a nation loses its dreams and visions , its end is inevitable. Its true, without a vision, the people perish. That which is true of a nation is also true for individuals.

The youth of our society need a vision for tomorrow. From an apartment house on the 26th floor a young person looks out the window only to see no place for themselves in a vast city. In that same apartment building another youth only hears gun shots day and night. Many youth cry hoping someone will hear and understand their cries. Some try to fight their way out to a better life, while others attempt to work their way up to success. But still many are simply looking out the window wondering, where do I belong or do I belong. Every young person should be urged to be an idealist. They should be told to take their dreams and visions into life as productive citizens. Biblically speaking, our youth need to be taught and trained, so that they can realize their dreams and visions in a productive way.

## APPLICATION

Harlem is a community filled with youth who have visions and dreams. These youth require of us to give them a model for ministry that will attend their special needs, lend a sympathetic ear and restore confidence. As a people of God with a unique cultural heritage,

we should ensure that our youth have every advantage in realizing their dreams and visions. With the proper trainers and training facilities, they can be empowered and equipped to become productive citizens and leaders in their community. The church has been and will always be an important component in the development of societies youth. Because of this, I firmly believe that the church cannot absent itself from having a significant amount of the responsibility of equipping our youth for leadership. The church must make its presence known and felt.

Youth programs are always challenging to the church. What makes it so challenging? When we consider the Biblical commission to the church found in the gospel of Matthew, we begin to understand part of the challenge of youth ministry for the church. Matthew's gospel states clearly and concisely that the gospel must go into all the world. Presenting the gospel to youth in general presents challenges. However, presenting the gospel to inner city youth is even more challenging. Because of their social condition, the church is challenged presenting the gospel to youth in ways that motivate them to a sense of mission as it relates to community outreach.

Our youth have a lot to offer their society. However, they need to know that they belong. Many youth go though life without purpose. If they could understand their station in life, perhaps they could also understand their purpose. This is a challenge for the church. The church is also challenged to deal with the social ills that youth are faced with, such as, peer pressure, sexual promiscuity, drugs and unemployment which plague our youth. Because many youth live in dysfunctional families, the church at times is challenged to be surrogate parents. Motivating and developing talent is equally challenging. Dr. Jawanza

Kunjufu states, "the best way to motivate black youth is not with money, but through the development of their God given talents."[10] The church faces many challenges as it develops character, builds self esteem and promotes self-motivation.

## CONTEXTUAL SETTING

The context of ministry where this model originated and was implemented was in the City of Harlem, New York. Harlem is a multi-ethnic and religious community. Individuals from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Caribbean Islands, Central and South America, Africa and those who relocated from the southern part of North America comprise Harlem. The fact that so many types of people reside in Harlem, makes this a unique place for ministry. Former mayor David Dinkins referred to it as "a beautiful mosaic of cultural diversity." Harlem is not only rich and unique culturally and religiously, there is a rich heritage in the area of the Performing Arts. Jazz tones and Blues tones can still be heard in the streets of Harlem. Restaurants and clubs echo the sentiments of the community's culture through music and food.. The Apollo Theater, where many notable musicians got their start, add to the heritage of Harlem. Arthur Miller's Dance Theater of Harlem provides discipline and culture for our youth. The Harlem Boys Choir adds to the Harlem experience as it helps develop the character and self esteem of young African American males.

In terms of economics, Harlem would rank as a lower to middle class area. While the resources are great, they don't seem to stay in Harlem. However, under the Dinkins

---

[10] Kujufu, Jawanza, <u>Motivating and Preparing Black Youth For Success</u> (Chicago, Illinois, Africa America Images) p33.

administration (former mayor of New York City) there was an apparent effort made to rebuild Harlem and promote black enterprise. On any given day, you can see street vendors lining the sidewalks selling their wares. As long as the community patronizes these merchants, they are able to make a living. In this way we invest in ourselves.

As one tours the streets of Harlem, one is quickly able to recognize the needs. It is not unusual to see drug dealing and drug busts on the streets of Harlem. Although the reports from local police precincts show that the rate of homicides are down, hand gun carrying is on the rise. While Harlem is quite historic, unique and rich in many ways, the needs are great. There are established programs to meet certain needs, but they are not enough. This is primarily because the population is so great. There is a need for more affordable day care which will enable more parents to work. The existing shelters are always filled to capacity. In New York City, there are about 30,000 homeless people. More culturally designed programs would help in the teaching and training of our youth, the most precious resource. Mentoring programs are necessary, especially for young black males. Programs for senior citizens are needed to give them an outlet. Many of them are prisoners in their own homes due to fear. Inner city children need safe places for recreation. The list of needs is great. While we may never resolve all of the problems that plague our city, or be able to facilitate all of the needs, it is my belief that our church (New Hope) can play a major role in addressing some of these pressing needs. It is necessary that we invest in our community.

The New Hope congregation is ready to face the challenges of its community. We recognize that in order to have an effective church ministry there must be an effective

community ministry. It is always important that the church and its community have a direct relationship. For the success of any community program at New Hope it must be understood from the beginning that problems will arise. However, the manner in which the congregation resolves the problems they encounter will, in most instances, determine the success or failure of the program. It then becomes necessary for the congregation to resolve any problems in a united way. It is equally important that the Pastor maintain a good working relationship with the congregation. Having worked diligently in leading the New Hope congregation towards more community programs, I can see that the church has in fact embraced the idea of more community ministries. At New Hope it is recognized that changes on the inside must take place first in order to affect the outside. If New Hope is to affect the outside community in positive terms, then positive changes must occur within our congregations.

Our communities are calling and demanding that churches take an active role in the development of the social, spiritual, physical and mental needs of our people. The youth in our communities have special needs that require a model for ministry specifically addressing their needs. The model needs to restore their sense of belonging. The model should also perpetuate self motivation and determination. The youth of our communities need a model that will build character and self esteem. Many youth may never benefit from the proposed model. However, it is hoped that this model will serve as a stimulant for those youth who desire a better quality of life.

# CHAPTER TWO

# THE MODEL OF MINISTRY

**STATEMENT OF FOCUS**

**TITLE:**  **Empowering And Equipping Inner-City Youth for Community Leadership for the Twenty-First Century Through Cultural and Spiritual Awareness.**

Over the past few years, society has taken a laissez-faire attitude towards the way we look, dress, the music we listen to, the books we read and the list goes on. We live in a society that accepts just about everything. It's not all right to kill others, yet it is acceptable to carry weapons. While teenage pregnancy is discouraged and abstinence outside of marriage is encouraged, the fact of the matter is there are still alarming statistics of teenage pregnancies, unwanted pregnancies, and AIDS among our youth. According to the 1994 Yearbook on the State of Americas Children, published by the Children's Defense Fund, 2,781 teenagers get pregnant per day and 3,325 babies are born to unmarried women per day.

Relationships between parents and children have broken down. Some of this is due to economic constraints. Parents are forced to put in long hours of work to make ends meet. As a result, their children are left in the care of others or they are left alone to fend for themselves. Although this type of lifestyle may be necessary, it does not always assist in developing a strong organized family. When parents spend most of their time outside the home, their children do not in all cases receive the proper training or guidance.

The youth in the inner cities are facing troublesome times. As the crime rate increases among inner city youth and employment decreases, our youth and their

communities face serious trouble. The pressures placed upon them by their peers do not help the situation. As one takes a good look at some of our youth in the city, it is evident that many of them live without plan or purpose. They possess very little or no self-determination or motivation, and they possess little or no self-esteem. Oftentimes, the end results of that attitude is an increased usage of drugs, homicides, suicides, unemployment, welfare, early parenthood, homelessness, and imprisonment. From generation to generation this cycle repeats itself. In an effort to provide a purpose for their existence, this model is being developed to give meaning, direction, and hope to inner city youth.

The focus of my model of ministry is to empower inner-city youth through character development, building up of self-esteem and the promotion of self determination and motivation. They need to understand their purpose of being in order to prevent them from falling into the various systems provided by society. It is the intent of this model to assist in preventing inner-city youth from having to attend specialized institutions that deal with drug abuse, crime, homelessness, early parenthood and other social problems that they might encounter. The model will be designed for those inner-city youth who desire to be productive citizens of their society, as well as potential community leaders. It is hoped that they will become self determined and motivated, economically, socially and spiritually.

## PLAN OF MODEL

When this model came to mind, I shared my view with several individuals. Everyone I spoke with thought that this model was necessary and good for our church and community. Ministers and other community leaders have offered their support. However, the question

that kept coming to me was, how was I going to do all that we discussed. I quickly realized that I would not be able to offer a 1-2-3 step answer. However, a process would have to be developed. As this model is developed, the issues that will be addressed include:

1) Character development, 2) Building up self esteem, 3) Promoting self-motivation and determination.

Throughout the country there are numerous youth programs that are doing fine jobs. This project does not in any way seek to negatively speak of other youth programs. It seeks to work along with other existing programs that are concerned with youth.


**PREPARATION FOR THE MODEL**

The preparation of this model started with a meeting with the Director of the Community Service Ministry of the New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church. This particular ministry serves to meet the spiritual and physical needs of those in our local community. The Community Service Ministry is the church's primary link to the community. The primary objective of the ministry is to reveal Christ while providing basic human needs. There were other church ministries such as Personal Ministries, Youth Ministries and the Ministry of Education that I could have utilized in developing this model. However, the Community Service Ministry had already established a relationship with community leaders that could be helpful in creating a new program in our church and community.

The purpose of the initial meeting was to discuss the Community Service's agenda for ministry and to reveal a ministry that would focus specifically on inner city youth. After

a lengthy and detailed discussion of various programs from day care to after school programs, we concluded that a ministry directed towards inner city youth was necessary. This conclusion was based on our assessment of society's youth as we saw it. We recognized that the task set before us was tremendous and we could not do it alone. Fortunately, the Community Services Ministry had a staff of workers. Incidentally, they were intentionally omitted from the initial meeting because I felt that in this case that it was important for the Pastor and Community Service leader be in one accord before presenting the new ministry to others. Having done our initial brain-storming, a special meeting was called which included the Community Service's staff.

The purpose of this meeting was three-fold. First of all it served to inform them of what the new ministry was all about. Secondly, it served as a means of obtaining their input regarding the ministry. The third purpose of the meeting was to address the expectations of those who would serve as facilitators of the model. The respective roles needed to be clearly defined.

In our first meeting with the Community Service staff, the idea of initiating a ministry for inner-city youth was presented. Although it was not planned, the make-up of those present consisted of individuals who worked for the Department of Sanitation and Social Services. Also present were teachers from both elementary and high school levels along with a nurse and a drug counselor. The different disciplines that were blended together helped to form a strong foundation for building and developing a model for ministry that would speak to the needs of inner-city youth. Because the needs were real and the desire great, the staff members embraced the idea of an inner city youth model with

excitement and anticipation. Our first meeting confirmed that this was an area of ministry that we wanted to establish within our church. We also discovered that we had a lot of preparation to do in a short period of time. Because we felt that this model of ministry was important and necessary, the meeting made all aware of the need for commitment and dedication. We recognized the challenge before us and were ready to move forward.

When we came together for a second meeting, we began to shape the model by receiving input regarding possible programs. It was important for all present to share their thoughts regarding the new model. They needed to feel a sense of ownership as some of them would be facilitators of the model. Because we were preparing a model for inner-city youth, it was necessary that we identify some of the relevant needs pertaining to our youth. We identified the lack of character and the need to help develop this area in our youth. We also recognized the need to build self-esteem. While engaged in intense dialogue, it was mentioned that one of the reasons why young people today do not always act with respect for others is because they don't respect themselves. Whether or not one accepts that statement, the fact remains, many young people have low self-esteem. Some of their low self-esteem is due in part to peer pressure. Sometimes their peers attack their physical appearance. The results of this type of attack often leads to depression and seclusion. Eating disorders may occur. The use of drugs and alcohol or the increase of the same may also occur. Often times attitudes change causing a young person to lose touch with self and the realities of life. Sometimes, low self-esteem occurs due to the family's economic status. It's easy to understand the negative feelings a youth may have regarding self when they come from a low income family, but what about those who come from affluent families?

Sometimes the youth from affluent homes have more problems with self esteem because they are always living in the shadows of their parents' success. Many youth are experiencing an identity crisis as a direct result of low self esteem. The reasons for low self esteem are vast. Our youth (inner-city in particular) need help in building up their self confidence and self-worth.

The meeting continued as other possible programs and issues were discussed. While dealing with various issues and program ideas, it was discussed and determined that we would direct this model for ministry towards inner city you between the ages of 13 - 18. An issue that was raised during the meeting was, what happens after self-confidence/self esteem has been restored and there is evidence a stronger character has developed? Where do the inner city youth go from there? What are they supposed to do then? At this point there was a need to re-visit why we were doing what we were doing. One purpose of the model was to create a desire for a better way of living for inner city youth. The objective of the model was to empower and equip inner city youth for community leadership. It was felt that the model should include something on self-motivation and determination in an effort to bring about a balance to character building and self-esteem. This added dimension to the model was very important. It was recognized in our planning that unless the youth we would be working with were self motivated and determined to be positive forces in their communities, the development of character and the building up of self esteem may not be of much benefit to themselves or others.

In an attempt to finalize our plans and bring our preparation to a close, it was necessary for us to have a third meeting before implementing the model. In this meeting we

discussed the program criteria as well as the expectations of those who would serve as facilitators. As a means of facing the task before us and accomplishing our goals and objectives through cultural and spiritual awareness, I presented three areas of central focus. These three areas would serve as the pillars of the project. All of the programs that we had discussed previously would be developed out of these three main areas of focus. The first area of focus would look at the place of God in each individual's life. God should be a part in all that we do. However, the way God is viewed by each person would in all likelihood determine the place of God in one's life. The second area of focus would concern itself with self. If an individual believes that they can perform a certain function in life, it is because they know themselves, and in most instances have confidence in themselves. If on the other hand an individual does not believe they can perform the same function as someone else and does not see it as a possibility, it may be because that person has little or no self confidence. It is important to be self confident. The third area focuses on community. As a result of focusing on community, the intent would be for inner-city youth to become positive forces in their context. In many instances, society's youth are viewed as a group of people always receiving but hardly ever giving. If society's youth come to understand the place of God in their lives, as they learn more about themselves, it is also possible that they can understand their communities and become leaders who make positive differences there. In the sections to follow, the areas of <u>God</u>, <u>Self</u>, and <u>Community</u> will be discussed in more detail. Those present at the meeting embraced the three areas of focus allowing us to continue preparing for the model's implementation.

Those who would facilitate the model in the areas that we discussed became our next topic of discussion. It was decided that potential facilitators be selected from within our church and community. What type of individuals would be needed? What will they be expected to do? These were the questions that we were now faced with.

Whenever a new program dealing with youth is presented for implementation it becomes critical to know who will work with them. Keeping the goals and objectives in mind, it is important that those selected to facilitate the program be able to work towards the goals and objectives already established. As our group thoroughly discussed what they wanted to see in potential facilitators, a specific list of expectations emerged. Those who would serve as facilitators in this model would be expected to:

1) have a burden for inner-city youth

2) be able to work with different cultures

3) display sincere dedication

4) be consistent

5) be open-minded and identify with young people

6) be sensitive to youth needs

7) communicate effectively.

If these expectations could be met, the possibilities of a successful model for youth ministry would be great. The question of the type of person needed to have an effective ministry had to be addressed. As this issue was discussed, several reactions came forward. Because we would be dealing with God, Self, and Community, the type of individual(s) we were looking for had to have the understanding of God in their personal life as well as a relationship with

God. It became apparent that since the subject of self-worth and self-esteem was part of the process of character development, any person facilitating had to be a type of person who was in touch with themselves (know who they are), be confident and be content with self regardless of their economic or social status. With regards to community, it was felt that those working in this area be knowledgeable of its history. It was also felt that individuals serving as facilitators accentuate the positives without neglecting the negatives of the community. It is recognized that it is not always easy to locate individuals who will take the time needed to work with today's youth. For this reason, it was our feeling that the type of individual needed be faithful and committed to the task that lie ahead. Because of the excitement generated by the planning staff, there was great anticipation to begin the model that had been diligently and carefully planned. Individuals were selected and personally asked by the Pastor to participate as facilitators of the youth ministry model. As a result of the personal contact with possible facilitators, a positive response was received and we now had the necessary people in place to implement the model.

At this point in our planning, although there was a sense of togetherness and readiness, there was also a need for a fourth meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to review all of our planning to ensure that everything was in order to the best of our ability for a successful model of youth ministry. In this meeting we discovered that we had not discussed recruiting youth to our program or designated a number of youth to work with. Although there were enough youth within our congregation to operate an effective ministry, we decided that the ministry be directed to inner city youth from our church and our community. Because this ministry was new to our church, it was felt that we set a goal of 20

youth to work with initially. Our methods of recruitment included: distribution of flyers, the use of church bulletins, and neighborhood posters. We also asked our congregation to announce the program to friends and family. With this final preparation, we concluded our meeting. Before we adjourned with prayer, it was agreed that we come together when the model had been completed. In that meeting we would evaluate the model.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF MODEL

The model began with a general introduction of the program by the coordinator. Several points were established to give the participants a sense of understanding of the program. It was established that the objective of the program was to empower and equip inner city youth for community leadership. The purpose was to reveal to them a better quality of life, give them a plan and a purpose for living and create a desire to be successful in life. The introductory remarks clearly stated that the program was for inner city youth between the ages of 13 - 18. Quite naturally the young people wanted to know what we would be doing and how long we would be doing it. It was established that we would be focusing on three areas pertaining to God, Self, and Community. It was mentioned that we would have 3 sessions in each area for a total of 9 sessions, excluding the introductory and closing session which would serve as orientation and evaluation sessions consecutively. The initial group of young people were excited about the program and agreed that each session would last about one hour and thirty minutes. From the outset of the program it was felt that input from the youth was important. For this reason they were given the opportunity to set time periods for each session.

During the orientation session, a survey was presented to the group (see Appendix A). The purpose of this survey was to obtain a better understanding of how the young people felt concerning the three areas of focus. This was also important in that it provided me with an idea of their knowledge in the areas of focus. It would help me to shape the model in such a way as to meet the specific needs of the youth who had enrolled in the program. The results of the survey with the participants was extremely helpful. Issues came forward which had great impact on what would be dealt with in the sessions to follow. As the areas of focus are presented in more detail in the sections to follow, some of the issues deriving from our orientation session will be clearly seen.

Because the program was designed to empower and equip inner city youth for leadership, it was essential that the participants be involved. For this reason, a dialogue model was being implemented. In addition to the regular facilitators, guest speakers would be invited to address the young people. Each speaker would encourage verbal participation from youth. If we do not allow the youth of today to express themselves, we continue to oppress them. When they are oppressed, they have no power to demonstrate what they are capable of doing. Dialogue is important. Through dialogue the participants are able to learn good communication skills. We began our first dialogue session by addressing the concept of God. Outlines of the three sessions pertaining to God are as follows:

**OUTLINE OF SESSION ONE**

Subject:  God
Topic:  God

I.      Who is God

       A.      Nature of God
           1.  Eternal
           2.  Omnipresence
           3.  Omniscience
           4.  Omnipotence
           5.  Immutable

       B.      Attributes of God
           1.  Holy  (Ps. 99:9)            5.  Loving  (Jer 31:3)
           2.  Righteous  (Ezra 9:15)     6.  Long-suffering (2 Peter 3:9)
           3.  Just (Rom 22:12)           7.  Gracious ( Titus 2:11)
           4.  Merciful  (Isa. 55:7,8)    8.  Pure (Hab. 1:13)
                                         9.  Truth (I John 4:8)

       C.      Doctrine of God
           1.  God the Father
           2.  God the Son
           3.  God the Holy Spirit

II.     Relevance of God

       A.      Purpose of God
           1.  Eternal salvation
           2.  Teach how to live

       B.      Importance of God in my life
           1.  Direction in Life
           2.  Focus of Life
           3.  Stability

**OUTLINE OF SESSION TWO**

Subject:  God
Topic:  Black Theology

I.      Introduction to Black Theology

        A.      Origins of Black Theology
            1.  Contemporary Black Theology began in 1960's
            2.  Black Theology dates back to slavery

        B.      Significant Contributors to Black Theology
            1.  James  Cone
            2.  J. Deotis Roberts
            3.  Gayraud Wilmore

II.     What is Black Theology

        A.      An inspired effort to interpret a Christian message for the Black
             Community of Faith
        B.      Black Theology is a Theology of Black  Liberation
        C.      A Theology of Blackness

III.    Importance of Black Theology

        A.      It affirms the existence of Blacks
        B.      Allows the Black Community to express their faith in God in their own
             context.
        C.      Brings hope to the oppressed.

# OUTLINE OF SESSION THREE

Subject:  God
Topic:  Womanist Theology

I        Importance of Womanist Theology

       A.      Provides a window of opportunity
       B.      Allows women to empower themselves

II.     Purpose of Womanist Theology

       A.      To affirm women spiritually and secularly in their own context
       B.      Provide an opportunity to express themselves according to their own experience
       C.      To provide a means of doing theology for the survival and liberation of Black Women

III.    Significant Contributors to Womanist Theology

       A.      Alice Walker
       B.      Jacquelyn Grant

## UNDERSTANDING GOD

Among youth, God is not generally a topic of discussion. As a matter of fact, in today's society, where handguns are common among youth, where drugs are increasingly detrimental, and where gang violence is gaining ground across America, its unusual to see or hear young people conversing about God. However, the fact of the matter is today's youth need the presence of God in their lives. In 1993, 48% of American households reported owning at least one gun. More than 200 million guns are in the hands of 257 million Americans. There are more gun dealers than gas stations according to the Violence Policy Center. Society's youth need the presence of God in their lives. According to FBI reports, an unprecedented level of violence occurred by juveniles in the late 1980's and early 1990's. In 1991 over 4,300 of 24,578 murders happened at the hands of offenders under age 20. A Northeastern University report said "arrests between 1985 - 1991 for criminal homicide increased among 13 - 14 year old males by 140%. Among 15 year olds, the percentage was 158, while for 17 year old males, about 121%. The arrest rates for 18 - 20 year old males increased by 113 percent."[12]   I believe that if our young people are to be properly empowered and equipped for leadership in the 21st century, they need to be exposed to the concept of God. Not only do they need to be exposed to God, but God must become part of the fabric of their lives. Like the apostle Paul, they must know, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." There is no doubt in my mind that God is a necessity. If our youth are to succeed in life, have a better quality of life, and be successful leaders, they must realize their need for God. God must be the foundation of all that they build. For this

---

[12] The State of the Children, Yearbook 1994, Introduction.

reason, the concept of God is placed in this model at this juncture. Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu states, "we need youth and adults who will depict in their behavior a commitment to God, the Black community, family education, excellence, work ethics, and self discipline"[13] God must always come first.

Whenever God is presented to youth various issues arise. Taking into consideration the responses received from the survey, during the orientation session, the two main issues that emerged was; who is God and what is the relevance of God?

On the subject of who God is, several ideas were conveyed. It should be noted that the model was not intended to produce experts in the field of theology, but to introduce theology to inner city youth. Because of the different religious beliefs represented by the participants, a Christian approach as opposed to a denominational approach was taken in dealing with the issues concerning God. It was important that none of the participants felt threatened or oppressed. Therefore, some basic Christian concepts of God were introduced.

The question of who God is was addressed by looking at the nature of God. When the nature of God is being discussed, at least 5 characteristics should be mentioned.

1.	God's Eternalness - Biblically speaking, God is without beginning or end.

2.	God's Omnipresence - God is present everywhere. This is a spiritual presence and not a material one; yet it is a very real presence. It should be noted, on the basis that 75 - 80 % of the participants were from Christian homes, there was a sense of God's presence in their life experiences.

3.	God's Omniscience - God is perfect in knowledge. By the omniscience of God it is meant that God knows self and all other beings whether they be actual or possible, whether they be past, present or future. God's knowledge is immediate, simultaneous and exhaustive.

---

[13] Kunjufu, Jawanza, Motivating and Preparing Black Youth For Success (Chicago, Illinois, Africa America Images) p24.

4.      God's Omnipotence - God is able to accomplish any task be it great or small. Jerimiah declared, "There is nothing too hard for thee." Jerimiah 32:17.

5.      God's Immutability - God is unchangeable. Because God is perfect there is no reason for change. Malachi 3:6, says, "I am the Lord, I change not."

Concerning the attributes of God, there are many attributes that could be selected for discussion. However, for our discussion 8 were selected. They are as follows:

1. God's Holiness - Psalms 99:9

2. God's Righteousness - Ps 145:17

3. God's Justness - Rev. 22:12

4. God's Mercifulness - Isa. 55:7

5. God's Lovingness - I John 4:8

6. God's Long-suffering - II Peter 3:9

7. God's Graciousness Titus 2:11

8. God's Pureness - Hab. 1:13

After discussing the attributes of God, it was felt that we should consider one or more topics in an effort to answer the question who is God. Although young people in general do not make God a part of their every day conversation, they have questions about God. In a basic way, the doctrine of God as it relates to the God-head was discussed. From a Christian perspective, the doctrine of three persons of the God-head is vitally involved in the plan of salvation. "It is a sacred truth that reveals to us that God the Father, sent God the Son into this world to redeem us, and that God the Holy Spirit applies the redemptive work to each of us. This fundamental doctrine should occupy our attention when giving consideration to the God-head."[14]

As human beings, we will always have questions concerning God. The fact that we speak of a being that we have never seen raises questions. Can we ever really know God?

---

[14] Jemison, T. H. Christian Beliefs (Mountain View, CA Pacific Press Publishing Association) p73.

Some may argue yes, but in another life. With all that we are privileged to know concerning God, there is still so much more to learn.

A second issue raised by the group had to do with relevance of God. The questions raised were, "Is God important for my living and how does God work in my life?" Before answering that question, the discussion began by us focusing on the purpose of God in the lives of people. Young people should never be under-estimated. Often times because they don't talk about God, there is a tendency to believe that they are not interested or know anything about God. I must confess that there was some reluctancy in presenting God to a group of inner city youth. I did not feel that this would be something that would interest them. However, as we dealt with the concept of God in the lives of people, my opinion quickly changed. As a matter of fact, I came to realize that not only did these young people know something about God, God meant something to them. There was, in fact, a purpose for God in their lives.

The idea of eternal salvation was presented. Inner city youth are looking for salvation. They want to be saved from the violence that they see on a regular basis. While some of them have had experiences with drugs in various forms, they want to be saved from drugs. They want to be saved from the pain of poverty. Many of them see God as the way out. It is from that background that God has purpose in their lives. As the subject of salvation was discussed further, our dialogue led us to a deeper understanding of salvation. It became apparent that the young people were not just looking for salvation from a few situations on earth, they were searching and reaching out for a better life altogether. Because approximately 75 - 80% of the youth came from Christian homes, this better life meant that

God would come one day and take them to a better place. Eternal salvation from this world is what many young people are looking for. Having discussed salvation with the group of inner city youth, I realized that we cannot be afraid to present spiritual things to them. For many young people today, God means salvation to them.

Another purpose for God in the lives of young people is to help them know how to live. As young people come to know the nature of God as well as the attributes of God, they learn how to live. Through personal Bible study and open dialogue they can know that God has left us a perfect example of how to live. It is important that young people establish their own relationship with God. The more young people study the Word of God, the more they get to know about God. By knowing God, they come to understand how God would have them live.

The relevancy of God in anyone's life should never be overlooked. On the issue of relevancy, we directed our attention to how God works in ones life. The truth of the matter is that young people want to know just how important God is or should be to them. Contrary to public opinion, God is very important to many youth. God is important to inner city youth because God represents hope and liberation to them. Some may assume that because young people raise the issue concerning the relevance of God, it suggests that God is not important to them. However, because God is important in the lives of inner city youth, the issue then is how does God work in my life? Three ideas were mentioned.

First of all there is the idea that with God, there is direction for life. Oftentimes, after individuals have surrendered their life to Christ, they believe with certainty that their life now has purpose and meaning. However, with God there is also direction. On several

occasions I have had the opportunity to speak to many young African American males. I have been told by them that they don't know where their life is going. Many of them are unemployed. Some of them have been incarcerated. However, when God becomes a part of their lives, regardless of their circumstances, they feel that they have a sense of direction. Secondly, there is the idea of being focused. Knowing where you're going is not always enough. One must be able to clearly see in which direction they are headed. Everybody wants to achieve something. For many people, God is important because they feel as long as there is a divine presence in their life, nothing can distract or detour them from achieving their goals. In a world filled with many distractions, there needs to be something that can keep us focused. Young people across America need to understand that with God in their lives, the possibilities of climbing the ladder of success and becoming positive forces in their communities are great. God gives focus. Without being focused, success will be difficult to achieve.

As we continued discussing the work of God in one's life, the third idea that emerged was that of stability. The presence of God in the life of a person has a stabilizing effect. People who have God in their lives are less likely to panic when things don't go their way. When asked how many youth had some type of family devotion in their homes, only about 30 - 35% of the participants present responded in the affirmative. When asked if they felt they came from stable homes, nearly 70% of the young people responded negatively. The reasons for instability in the home are many. However, where God is present, stability is greater. God is necessary for stability. With a clearer understanding of God and the relevance of God, our session ended.

It was stated previously that God is not a topic of general discussion among today's youth. All too often when trying to help young people or give them a sense of direction, God is intentionally omitted from the discussions. The perception is that God will be a turn off. However, when it comes to presenting God to society's youth, we cannot be intimidated by those who may say youth are not interested in talking about God. Our youth cannot be underestimated when it comes to their thoughts and feelings of God. Those who have opportunity should present God in a way that creates desire and appreciation. We must help our young people identify with God on their level and even in their culture. For this reason it was important that Black Theology be introduced to inner city youth. The participants were informed that we would be dealing with Black Theology in our next session.

## THE PLACE OF BLACK THEOLOGY

When we came together for our next session the concept of Black Theology was presented. To a group of inner city youth where the predominant ethnic culture is of African-American decent, the issue of Black Theology becomes important for character development, personal growth, and self esteem. In a basic but meaningful way a few ideas on the subject were introduced. The immediate question that emerged from the group was, what is Black Theology? In order to answer that question we needed to understand the origins of Black Theology.

The early beginnings of Black Theology can be traced back to the early days of slavery. While under the oppression of the accepted system of slavery, the slaves found a way to identify with God and be liberated within and among themselves. In secret, slaves

came together and worshipped. It was through their worship that the Black church began. According to Dr. Dwight Hopkins, "slave religion provides the first source for a contemporary statement on Black Theology." [15]

Although Black Theology dates back to the days of slavery, a more contemporary view of Black Theology began during the 1960's. African American theologians and clergy began to define the faith of Black churches and communities. Several individuals have made significant contributions for the continuation of the Black Theological movement. The movement has sought to express the feelings of an oppressed people, while moving toward liberation through a theology that Blacks could identify with. James Cone, has significantly contributed to the Black Theology movement with works such as, Black Theology and Black Power and A Black Theology of Liberation. At the center of all Cone's works in the area of Black Theology is the theme of liberation. Another contributor to Black Theology was J. Deotis Roberts. He wrote on Black Consciousness in Theological Perspective. Roberts also wrote Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology, which was very significant. Gayraud Wilmore has been credited with contributing the most to the early development of Black Theology. "For Wilmore, Black theology is more than a Christian discourse about the God of the mainline denominational Black churches; it is discourse about the religious dimension in the total black community."[16]

What then is Black Theology? According to Major J. Jones, "Black Theology is a conscience inspired effort to interpret a Christian message for the Black community of

---

[15] Cummings, George, Dwight Hopkins, Cut Loose Your Stammering Tongue (Maryknoll, New York Orbis Books p1.

[16] Cone, James H. Gayraud S. Wilmore. Black Theology: A Documentary History Volume 1: 1966 - 1976 (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books) p91.

faith."[17] Blacks need to understand themselves, their roles, and their places in society from a spiritual perspective. "Black Theology is also a theology of Black liberation. It seeks to plumb the black condition in the light of God's revelation in Jesus Christ, so that the black community can see that the gospel is commensurate with the achievement of black humanity. Black Theology is a theology of blackness. It is the affirmation of black humanity that emancipates black people from white racism, thus providing authentic freedom for both white and black people."[18]

Inner city youth need to know more about their culture through the vehicle of Black Theology. At first, some may not see the need for Black Theology, but it is necessary. There are at least three reasons for Black Theology. It is necessary because it first brings affirmation to the existence of blacks. A second reason is that it allows the black community to express their faith in God in their own context. If theology comes out of an experience with God, then Black Theology enables the black community to have a continuous experience with God. A third reason for Black Theology is that is brings hope to those who feel oppressed. Oftentimes, the youth of our societies feel that they are in a state of hopelessness. Because of Black Theology, even inner city youth can see a way out of their hopeless state.

## WOMANIST THEOLOGY

In working with young people I have discovered that there is a common need among them. That need is to be free. It is not that youth want to be free from common household

---

[17] Jones, Major J. The Color of God (Mercer University Press, Macon, GA) p2.

[18] Cone, James H., Gayraud S. Wilmore. Black Theology: A Documentary History Volume 1: 1966 - 1976 (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books) p38.

chores, house rules, or even authoritative figures such as parents and teachers. They simply desire to be free to express and demonstrate their capabilities. To be a young African-American male is difficult. While African-Americans have come a long way socially and economically, social injustices are still being committed by society at large. Young African-American males are being overlooked for certain types of employment, not because they are unqualified, but because of their race. For African-American women it is twice as difficult because of the gender factor. Womanist Theology then becomes important. Within themselves, African-American women have feelings of oppression. However, this oppression comes from outside influences apart from themselves. Frances E. Wood said that the ability to oppress one another is exhibited only by human beings. She further states "no other life form on the planet engages in intentional acts of oppression or wanton destruction."[19]

Youth in general want to be free. African American woman want to be free to express themselves and demonstrate their abilities. Unfortunately society is still trying to stifle the forward progress of women. Although the opportunities for advancement are there for women, they are either faced with sexual harassment or lowered salaries although the demands are the same or greater than that of their male counterparts. Young African American women have been saying and are still saying that they will no longer accept the oppression and various forms of discrimination that still exist in society. It is not easy being an African American woman; much less being a young, African-American woman.

---

[19] Townes, Emilie M. A Troubling in my Soul (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books) p38.

Recognizing the difficulties that women are faced with, Womanist Theology provides a window of opportunity. It also allows women to empower themselves. It was out of Black Theology that Womanist Theology emerged during the 1980's and 1990's. What was the purposes of Womanist Theology?

1.    To affirm women both spiritually and secularly in their own context.

2.    To provide the opportunity to express themselves according to their own experiences.

3.    To provide a means of doing theology for the survival and liberation of Black women.

Several women have contributed to Womanist Theology. The meaning of the term "womanist" originated with Alice Walker. Walker defines the term as a Black feminist or feminist of color. She is committed to the survival and wholeness of an entire people, male, and female, and is opposed to separation. The goal of womanist theology is to see all of her people free. While it is true that Womanist Theology has emerged from Black Theology, it is also true that Black Theology has been silent on feminist issues. Jacquelyn Grant, a leading womanist theologian challenges Black Theology. She says "Black theology cannot continue to treat Black women as if they are invisible creatures who are on the outside looking into the black experience, the Black church and the Black Theological enterprise. It will have to deal with the community of believers in all aspects as integral parts of the whole community."[20]

Teenage African American women headed toward the 21st century need to know that liberation is possible. They no longer have to accept injustices placed upon their mothers

---

[20] Cone, James H., Gayraud S. Wilmore. Black Theology: A Documentary History Volume 1: 1966 - 1979 (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books)p334.

and grandmothers. They no longer have to feel the oppression of male dominance. They need to be encouraged for church and community leadership. Womanist Theology provides a better tomorrow for both men and women. With a better understanding of God, the place of Black Theology and Womanist Theology, we move toward an understanding of self. The session outlines concerning self are as follows:

## OUTLINE OF SESSION FOUR

**Subject: Self**
**Topic: Self**

I.      Who Are You - Building Self Esteem

        A.      Reasons for Low Self Esteem

               1. Peers negatively spread to individuals
               2. Little or no confidence in youth by parents
               3. Unhappy with personal appearance
               4. Academic failure
               5. Lack of self confidence

II.     How to Build Self Esteem

        A.      Say and know who you are
        B.      Know what makes you feel good and bad about yourself
        C.      Live up to personal goals and expectations
        D.      Focus on what you have learned about yourself

III.    Importance of Self Esteem

        A.      Builds character, promotes determination and self motivation
        B.      Equips youth for effective leadership
        C.      Provides a feeling of self worth
        D.      Affects behavior

# OUTLINE OF SESSION FIVE

**Subject:  Self**
**Topic:  Decision Making**

I.      Importance of Decision Making

      A.      Decision making affects what may or may not occur in the future
      B.      Decisions should be thought though carefully
      C.      Decisions help maintain and enhance self esteem

II.     How are Decisions Made

      A.      Six steps in decision making

            1. Determine the question
            2. Examine the question
            3. Collect date and identify influence
            4. Investigate consequences
            5. Decide
            6. Evaluate

# OUTLINE OF SESSION SIX

**Subject: Self**
**Topic: Values & Goals**

I.      What is a Value

II.     The Necessity of Values

III.    What is a Goal

IV.    Importance of Goals

        A.     Gives purpose to life
        B.     Gives meaning to life
        C.     Two types of Goals

                1. Short term
                2. Long Term

        D.     Realistic Goals
        E.     Process for Goal Setting

**UNDERSTANDING SELF**

The place of God in one's life serves as both a foundation and a link. Inner city youth should understand that with God all things are possible. If their lives are built on the foundation of God, there is no limit concerning their future possibilities. By being linked to God young people will better understand themselves.

It is important to know God in order to know self. The question raised in our next session was: "Who are you?" The intent of the question was to build self-esteem. Many young people never reach their full potential because of low self-esteem. Self-esteem for youth can be diminished for many reasons. Some of the reasons are as follows:

1.      peers speak negatively of them

2.      parents have little or no confidence in children

3.      personal appearance (not happy with their looks)

4.      unable to achieve academically

5.      lack of confidence in self

How is self esteem built? How does one really come to know themself? There are four simple steps that can assist in building self esteem and understanding one's self. The first step is Say and know who you are. In other words, take inventory of yourself. Look at self and be honest with yourself. Oftentimes young people don't want to talk about their weakness. However, they should be encouraged to face their weaknesses while accentuating their strengths. They should also be encouraged to identify their abilities. Some young people have the tendency to put themselves down before they have given themselves a fair

chance. People must know who they are and be able to express it without fear or shame. This comes as a result of personal introspection.

The second step in building self esteem is <u>Examining what makes you feel good and bad about yourself.</u> Again this calls for personal introspection and reflection. In examining one's feeling about self, be they good or bad, it becomes necessary to look at various things that have effect or impact on one's life. In the case of young people, these things could be friends, family members, special hobbies and talents. All of these things significantly affects self-esteem positively or negatively. The third step in the process of building self esteem is <u>living up to your own goals and expectations.</u> Goal setting will be addressed later in this chapter.

The youth of our society need to be challenged to live up to their own goals. This demands self determination and motivation. If they reach the goals set by themselves through self determination and motivation they in effect will build their own self esteem. It is for this reason that the youth of our society need positive forces from without to encourage them to be self motivated and determined. The fourth and final step in the process of building self esteem is to <u>focus on what you have learned about yourself.</u> It is important to re-visit one's strengths and weaknesses and personal feelings about self as self has determined them. Understanding who you are and what you represent will help in future situations. These four steps can greatly influence self-esteem.

Self esteem is crucial to the development of young people. For African-American youth from inner cities who are still viewed in negative ways, self esteem is crucial. If youth can feel good about themselves, they can feel equipped to become leaders in society

regardless of how they may be viewed. Young people today need individuals who will empower and equip them by building up their self esteem. According to Reynold Bean, "self esteem is the state that results from four conditions. These conditions are found within the individual and in their environment. They are:

1. "A sense of uniqueness - a feeling that you have qualities that are special and different.

2. A sense of connectiveness - the ability to gain satisfaction from the individuals, places on things you feel connected to.

3. A sense of power - having the competence to do the things you must do, the resources to effectively express this competence and the opportunity to influence important circumstances in your life.

4. A sense of models - having reference points to help make sense of the world and to set personal goals values and personal standards."[21]

Self esteem affects one's behavior. People behave the way they see themselves to be. A person with high self esteem will probably feel positive about themselves and are likely to succeed in life. Contrary to that fact is that a person with low self esteem will probably be dissatisfied with self and in some cases become reclusive. Unfortunately, there are many individuals who have tremendous potential but fail to see it or utilize it because of low self esteem. Young people rightly trained can be leaders in society as a result of feeling good about themselves.

Self esteem can build character and promote self determination and motivation. Self esteem in youth can be generated in young people by helping them to know who they are by

---

[21] Bean, Reynold. The American Health Foundation (Dubuque, Iowa, Kendall/Hunt Publishing).

identifying their strengths and weaknesses and their gifts, getting in touch with true feelings of self, and identifying both good and bad qualities. When a person knows who they are, they have a better sense of knowing what they want in life. However, knowing what you want in life and how to get it are two different things. Both of them however, require making decisions. Leaders and potential leaders must be able to make decisions. Our next session dealt with decision making.

## DECISION MAKING

Decision making is important in that every decision has some affect on what may occur at a later date. All too often decisions are made with little or no thought. When this happens the results are usually disastrous. Making decisions and taking actions that reflect one's beliefs and values help to maintain and enhance self esteem. The questions then becomes; How do I make decisions? The American Health Foundation offers six basic steps in making intelligent decisions. The list is as follows:

- Determine the question - What questions need to be answered?

- Examine the choices - What are the possibilities?

- Collect data and identity influences - What do you need to know about each choice and what affects your choice?

- Investigate consequences - What are the reasons for and against each choice?

- Decide - Which is the best choice?

- Evaluate - Would you make the same decision again? Why? Why not?

These simple steps can help young people make decisions that may affect them and others in the future. In helping to develop character, create a desire to be productive citizens, and give

purpose and plan for living, young people need to establish goals and values. During the next session goals and values were defined and determined.

**VALUES & GOALS**

By way of definition, a value is the degree of importance a person assigns to a particular action, feeling, attitude, or idea. Presuming one wants to be a leader, the degree of importance a person attaches to it will determine the outcome. The importance of a particular idea often determines the value of it. Values are necessary because they are extensions of who we are. Generally speaking, people operate out of a set of personal values. Young people should be encouraged to look into their own values. They need to know what is important to them. Once this is clear, goals can then be set.

What is a goal? A goal is that which a person desires to achieve. It is necessary in that it can give purpose and meaning to life. Youth need to be encouraged to set goals in life. There are two types of goals. First there are short term goals. Short term goals are those goals which an individual can achieve with little or no complication in a short period of time. While all goals need planning, short term goals don't need as much. Long term goals on the other hand require more planning because the nature of the goal may be more complex. Long term goals could take years to achieve. Once it has been established which type of goal one is dealing with, then planning can proceed. In planning to achieve goals that have been set, one must remember the importance of these goals being realistic. Realistic goals are those that are controllable. In order for goals to be realistic they should be:

Definable -     for the purpose of planning the goal must be defined.

Desirable -   There should be a strong passion for the goal set.

Achievable -  Those who set goals should have a sense of their abilities to achieve the goals set.  The goal set should not be out of reach.

Appropriate - goals to be achieved should be compatible to age, sex, and physical circumstances.

Measurable -  goals should be expected to be achieved in a reasonable time with reasonable use of energy.

Successes in achieving a particular goal can be a positive force in terms of enhancing and rebuilding self esteem.  Once one goal has been realized, it can be the driving force to achieving other goals.  It is important to mention that several goals should not be attempted at one time.  It is better to succeed in one than to fail in many.  A basic process in goal setting is as follows:

1)   Think about your goal - What do you want to achieve?

2)   Ask yourself can I do it? - As the goal realistic?

3)   Review the information and choices - What is needed to achieve the goal?

4)   Have a plan of action - What steps will be used to realize the goal?

5)   Exercise your plan - How does the plan affect you?

6)   Test the results - Did the plan work?  Did you achieve the goal?

The way one views life may largely depend on the goals and values they have.

## UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY

This final area of focus concerns itself with the community. Where are youth with respect to their communities. Do they have a place in society? Do they have a voice? These and other questions will be addressed in this section.

### OUTLINE OF SESSION SEVEN

**Subject: Community**
**Topic: Community**

I.      Understanding your Community

       A.      Historical Nature
       B.      Cultural Background
       C.      Communities Strengths and Weaknesses
       D.      Community Leaders

II.     Motivating Factors of Community Leadership

       A.      Unsatisfied with present community conditions
       B.      Desire to see a community change
       C.      Desire the opportunity to make a difference
       D.      The idea of being recognized in the community

III.    Philosophy of Leadership

       A.      Principle centeredness
       B.      Assisting people in realizing their potential
       C.      Allowing people to utilize their talents

IV.     Characteristics of Leaders

       A.      Good Communicator
       B.      Effective Motivators
       C.      Risk Takers
       D.      Accepts Criticism
       E.      Decision Makers
       F.      Ability to Effect Change
       G.      Good Listener

*NOTE: This outline covers three sessions.

As young people are being prepared for community leadership they need an understanding of their community. Issues to be addressed should include:

- The historical nature of the community
  What type of community is it socially, economically, politically and spiritually?

- The cultural background of the community
  What are the various cultures?
- The Population of the community

- The community's strengths and weaknesses

- Past and present community leaders
  What examples and legacy have they left, what have they done, and are doing?

Many young people in inner cities want to have a place in their communities. The feeling however is that they have no voice. This feeling can cause some young people to become displaced and insensitive to their community unnecessarily. Rather than feeling out of touch with the community, they should feel the need and importance of being a community leader. When asked what is the importance of being a leader one response was; "being a leader is important because I can make a difference." This is true of leaders. Leaders have the ability to effect change that makes a difference.

Inner city youth have an interest in community leadership. What are the motivating factors of their community interest:

- They are not satisfied with present conditions

- They want a change of lifestyle

- They want the opportunity to make a difference

-    The idea of being recognized as somebody

While these reasons for leadership may appear selfish, they are for the good of communities. Every opportunity should be given to those who desire to be leaders. It is possible that all who desire to be leaders do not possess leadership skills. This is not to say they can never become leaders. If the gifts and abilities one has are properly cultivated and trained for leadership then that person can be a good leader.

Leaders often have a philosophy of leadership. Examples of leadership philosophies are:

- principle centeredness.

- assisting people in realizing their potential.

- allowing people to utilize their talents.

A persons philosophy usually begins with their philosophy of life, values, and purpose. It then focuses upon their understanding of the nature of the entity to be served as well as their own attitude of that entity. Ultimately ones' philosophy deals with self as it relates to personal potentials and needs.

The characteristics of leaders are those who are generally:

-    good communicators

-    effective motivators

-    unafraid to take chances

-    don't mind criticism

-    ability to make decisions

-    able to effect change

-       good listeners

Leadership requires competency. Competency relates to efficiency. Competency is not how well our skills may be developed, but how well we relate our skills to our objectives. In other words, we must apply our knowledge to our mission. Inner city youth can become leaders today for the twenty-first century. Every opportunity should be afforded to them to help their dreams turn to realities.

# CHAPTER THREE

# RESULTS OF THE MODEL

Whenever something new is presented to a group of individuals, there are generally two attitudes. These two attitudes could be referred to as pessimism and optimism. There were those who felt that the model would not and could not accomplish the goal laid out before them. Some felt that our facilities were not adequate for such a program that we were endeavoring to implement. Others felt that there may not be any interest for the program from the community. Still others felt that we may just be wasting our time trying to cultivate a desire for a better way of life among inner city youth. There were those who said that we were attempting to do more that we could handle. I conclude that no matter what program is being presented, there will always be people who simply just don't want to be involved. We should never forget the old saying, "nothing ventured, nothing gained."

There were those who believed that the proposed model could be of benefit to our church and community. Those who were optimistic saw the value and need to work with inner city youth. The model was a success as a result of the effort of those who worked diligently with it. Because of what we were doing and how we implemented it, other community programs wanted to know if we would work with their programs. Our Director of Community Service made referrals to our program. Each of our sessions were successful. This can be attributed to several factors:

-        good communication skills by facilitators

-        a genuine interest for the success of inner city youth

- the open dialogue between facilitators and participants

- the enthusiasm displayed by participants

- dedication and commitment of facilitators

- the desire of participants for a better way of living

Even though our facilities were not the best, it did not hinder the program. On the opening day only 7 youth showed up. We had planned for 20 and expected at least 10. There was disappointment but we were also encouraged by the 7 present. Over the course of the next two sessions, our attendance grew to 43. By the time of our last session, our attendance had reached approximately 80 participants. This confirmed that the model was needed in our church as well as community. Parents and community leaders recognized the benefit of the model and saw to it that their young people were in attendance.

The model brought change in the minds of the youth. Many of them expressed a desire to continue their education in an effort to become positive influences in their communities . By attending the sessions they were able to gain a better understanding of the place of God in their lives. While we dealt with theological issues, it was done on a level that was not complex or complicated. The model also enabled the youth to better understand themselves in terms of their self worth as well as their future potentials. As a result of coming to a better understanding of God and themselves, they were also able to see and understand their place and role in society.

Decisions were made to return to school after having dropped out. The participants recognized the value of an education in becoming a positive influence in their communities. Not only were they determined to finish high school, but there were those who decided to

seek higher education in college. It was apparent at the conclusion of the sessions that these inner city youth wanted to do something positive with themselves in their community. They left with self-determination and motivation.

As a result of doing this model some discoveries were made. We discovered that this type of model was long over due. Parents and community leaders from both church and community had been waiting for a model such as this. We also discovered that the youth wanted to express themselves in the setting that was provided. Youth are dealing with social and domestic issues that are very difficult for them to handle alone. Unfortunately, many of them cannot look inside their own home for help. On one occasion one of the facilitators, when talking about values for living and goal setting, raised a particular question. The question was simply who is your hero? To this question came several responses which included professional athletes, famous actors and actresses and popular people in the world of music. Not one young person mentioned their mother or father. When asked what about their parents, one young man from the Dominican Republic referred to his father as a "Punk." The model provided an outlet for personal frustrations. On the last day of the program as the guest facilitator was about to give closing remarks, he was abruptly stopped by an African American young man about 17 or 18 years of age. The young man said publicly, "Don't stop now, don't stop now. I need this!" As it turned out, this young man was a seller and user of drugs. He was looking for a change of lifestyle. He needed help. The model provided an avenue of help and hope for those dealing with various issues in life. In spite of a few minor problems, we were able to see positive changes in the attitudes and outlook of the church, community, and youth as a result of this model.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# EVALUATION OF THE MODEL

The evaluation of the model was done by personal interviews and questionnaires. The interviews were conducted by the program coordinator. The purpose of the evaluation was to ascertain information concerning the productivity and necessity of the model. The information gathered would help reshape the model for future use. The facilitators, participants, program planners, and context associates participated in the evaluation.

The interview with the facilitators was designed to express how they felt about their roles, what problems they may have encountered, and if they would participate in this program again. A summary of their evaluation is listed as follows: The facilitators:

- felt that their role as facilitators was serious business
- indicated the need to have more time for subject preparation
- felt that the group became too large and needed to be divided
- felt that they needed more time with the young people
- felt that the project was personally rewarding and meaningful for all
- indicated a desire to facilitate again

The interview with the program planners was designed to see how well the model had been planned, its effectiveness, and possible improvements. The program planners were satisfied with the model. They felt that the model had accomplished the objectives of empowering and equipping inner city youth for leadership through cultural and spiritual awareness by character development, building up of self esteem and the promotion of self determination and motivation. There were however some concerns. Many of the program planners:

- felt the need for more time to prepare the model
- felt the need to include community members in the planning
- felt the need to include at least 2 young people in the planning process
- indicated a need to limit the enrollment or have 2 groups meeting simultaneously if space allows
- indicated the possibility of implementing the model twice a year.

The interview with the context associates was designed to find out how they felt about my role as program coordinator. In their description/evaluation of me, they felt that I:

- was sensitive to the needs of youth
- identified well with young people on their level
- had a vision for the future of our youth
- presented the model well generating excitement about it

The evaluation of the model from the youth was most important. A questionnaire was designed for them. The purpose of this questionnaire was to evaluate whether or not there was a change in their view of God, Self, and Community. A summary of the results is as follows:

- 95% indicated that God is important in their life.
- 65% indicated that their understanding of God changed or improved.
- 50% indicated a desire to know more about God.
- 65% indicated that they are happy with their life.
- 80% felt good about themselves.
- 90% indicated that as a result of the sessions, they were motivated to finish high school, obtain a college degree, and abstain from drugs and alcohol.
- 90% are not satisfied with the present conditions of their community.
- 90% want to see a change in their community.
- 85 - 90% showed interest in becoming a community leader.

Receiving the evaluations from the various groups proved to be very helpful and enlightening. It confirmed to all who were involved from the beginning to end how effective and necessary the model was. Although the model was successful, all did not go the way it was planned. Originally the model was designed for 9 sessions. However, because of some

of the participants summer program schedule, we had to forgo 3 of our sessions. However we were still able to cover all of our topics for discussion, but could not spend as much time in all of the areas that we wanted to. We discovered that the time allotted for each session was too short. Because the youth were heavily involved in the discussion, where we had allotted 1 - 1 1/2 hours, 2 hours would have served us better. Although we had enough facilitators to accommodate the groups, we should have split the group in half when were reached 30 participants. Smaller groups are always better to work with. It is recognized that some areas need to be adjusted for improvement. However, the church and the community see the value of this model. With continued adjustments, this model can be a tremendous resource for those who see the need To  EMPOWER AND EQUIP INNER CITY YOUTH FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY THROUGH CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL AWARENESS.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# FUTURE OF THE MODEL

The question that could be raised is where does this model go from here?  Although this model was conceived in the New Hope Seventh-day Adventist church in Harlem, New York, it can be transferred to anywhere it is needed.  The format has been conveniently arranged to be utilized as a step by step process.  By understanding God, one can better understand self.  When one comes to know self , one can find their place in society.  As young men and women become liberated through character development, building up self esteem and the promotion of self determination and motivation they become empowered and equipped to reach their full potential.  The model has been designed as a resource for churches and community organizations who have a desire to see inner city youth succeed in their communities.

Because this model was prepared for inner city youth it cuts across all racial barriers. While theological issues have been presented in this model, it was presented in a non denominational way.  Therefore, any denomination can use this model without feeling threatened.  For the development of character and the building up of self esteem, this model can become a necessary instrument.

At the New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church, it is our intentions to continue to include the use of this  model in our after school program.  As a future goal, we are endeavoring to broaden the use of this model in community centers where the focus will be on preparing youth for leadership.  With some refinement of the model we can achieve our goal.

# CHAPTER SIX

# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

**Personal Learning**

Learning is daily process that is necessary for personal growth. As a result of doing this project, I received a greater knowledge and appreciation of a few things.

Prior to entering United Theological Seminary, inclusive language was foreign to me. Although I had heard of it, I never used it. I have learned to be inclusive in my speech as well as writing.

In the Seventh-day Adventist church, 1995 was designated as the year of the woman. For African American women in our churches, this lifted a cloud of oppression. Our women were honored and praised for their womanhood and achievements. Womanist Theology and Black Theology have taught me to be more sensitive to the oppressiveness that exists and has given me a better understanding of liberation theology. I now understand that Womanist Theology does not seek to separate males from females but seeks to make us whole.

While engaged in the project, I learned that young people do in fact desire to lead productive lives. Life is not just a party for them. There is a serious side to them, a side that seeks guidance.

Sometimes when doing certain types of programs, we look for certain professionals in a particular area. I learned that within the context of my ministry there were individuals knowledgeable enough to facilitate the discussions although they were not experts in youth ministry. It taught me to give willing people a chance.

Doing a youth ministry project under the heading of Black Theology/Womanist Theology has taught me that youth not only want to know who they are culturally and spiritually, there is a definite need for them to know.

As a result of doing this model for youth ministries, I have learned that, in spite of all the existing youth programs, there is still a need for others that will invest in society's young people.

**PERSONAL GOALS**

- Become more active with the communities youth.

- Assist inner-city youth in their personal development.

- Continue to build and develop a positive youth ministry at the New Hope

   Seventh-day Adventist Church.

**CONCLUSION**

We cannot stop now. There is a cry for help. Young people across the nation are looking for something and someone who will address their needs. The Black church has been and continues to be a positive influence in its community. Many significant community programs have emerged from within the Black church. Churches of all denominations and cultural backgrounds should be urged and challenged to meet specific needs of society's youth. The youth of today are our future. They are our greatest resource for future existence. They should be challenged to reach their full potential.

The ideas and principles set forth in this model have challenged many youth to become productive citizens in society. It is my hope and desire that community organizations will adopt this model within their context. The model can be used for

guidance and direction as well as instruction. The task of working with young people is never easy. Sincere interest and dedication is necessary. The proper instrument(s) are also necessary. The model used at the New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church in Harlem, New York, has been tested and tried. It can be utilized in any inner city. It has been realized that inner city youth want to be empowered and equipped. It is also a fact that many of them want to be leaders. They can be leaders if they are given a chance.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As a church and community leader, I felt the need to enhance my ministry through continued education. United Theological Seminary has facilitated that need. I am grateful to my peers and the peer group process. They have been a source of encouragement and has helped me to focus on my project. My mentors Dr. Jacquelyn Grant and Dr. Dwight Hopkins have been a source of inspiration and encouragement. Also, their wisdom has brought direction and clarity to my project. I sincerely appreciate their mentioning. I wish to thank my context associate, Vanetta Adams, who supported me in this project from beginning to end. She was instrumental in recruiting many of the project participants. A special word of thanks is expressed to my wife Ann Guy. This project could not have been completed without her constant support and assistance. To my three children, Marcus, Marcellus and Alicia, thanks for the inspiration that I received from you throughout the proecss. This project has been beneficial to me, the church, the community and inner city youth. Through this model of youth ministry, young people all over can become empowered and equipped for community leadership for the 21st century through cultural and spiritual awareness.

## APPENDIX A

### JAM TIME II - Youth Making A Difference
### Personal Perspective Questionnaire

1. Who is God to you?

   A. Friend
   B. Father
   C. Mother
   D. Supreme Being
   E. Other (specify) _____

2. Is God important in your life?                    Yes         No

3. A) Do you have a relationship with God?           Yes         No

   B) If no, would you like to have a relationship
      with God?                                       Yes         No

4. How do you see yourself?

   A)  Strong
   B)  Weak
   C)  Outspoken                    (Circle all that apply)
   D)  Shy
   E)  Outgoing
   F)  Other (specify) _____

5. If you could change yourself, what would you change?

   A)  Physical apperance
   B)  Personality
   C)  Attitude
   D)  None of the above
   E)  All of the above
   F)  Other (specify) _____

6. Do you find it easy to get along with people?     Yes         No

7. Do people easily get along with you?              Yes         No

8. Are you happy with yourself?                      Yes         No

9. Are you active in your community?                 Yes         No

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10. | Do you see yourself as a community leader? | Yes | No |
| 11. | If you answered "No to question 10, would you like to be active in your community? | Yes | No |
| 12. | Are you willing to make sacrifices to make a difference in your community? | Yes | No |
| 13. | Do you presently feel that you have a place in your community? | Yes | No |
| 14. | Do you have a voice in your community? | Yes | No |
| 15. | Do you feel that your community has done enough for you? | Yes | No |

## APPENDIX B
## JAM TIME II

## FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1.  Has your understanding of God changed or improved?       Yes__ No__

2.  Is God important to your life?       Yes __ No __

3.  Do you want to know more about God?       Yes __ No __

4.  Who is God to you?     Friend__     Brother __     Mother __
                        Father __     Sister __
                        All of the above __     None of the above __

5.  What is God to you?     Man __     Woman __     Supreme Being __
                        All of the above __     None of the above __

6.  Are you happy with the way your life is going?       Yes __ No __

7.  If you could change something about yourself, what would you change?
                        Attitude __     Personality __ Height __
                        Weight __     Other (specify)__
                        All of the above__     None of the above __

8.  Do you feel good about yourself?       Yes __ No __

9.  Do you feel you can be a success on your own?       Yes __ No __

10. As a result of these sessions, have you been motivated to live a productive life by:
          ___ Finishing high school
          ___ Getting a college degree
          ___ Abstaining from use and selling of alcohol and drugs

11. Is the quality of life in your community important to you?       Yes __ No __

12. Are you satisfied with what is happening in your community?       Yes __ No __

13. Would you like to see a change in your community?       Yes __ No __
    If yes, what change_____

14. Is it your desire to be a leader in your community?      Yes __ No __
    if no, why not._____
    _____

15. Do you think you can make a difference in your community?   Yes __ No __
    If yes - What difference _____
    _____
    If no - why not_____
    _____

***IN CHRIST YOU CAN ATTAIN EVERYTHING - AIM HIGH - REACH YOUR GOALS***
Thank you for filling out the questionnaire and thank you for coming. I look forward to seeing you in the near future.

APPENDIX C
OUTLINE OF SESSIONS
For The Model

Subject: God
Topic: God

I.      Who is God

        A.      Nature of God
                1. Eternal
                2. Omnipresence
                3. Omniscience
                4. Omnipotence
                5. Immutable

        B.      Attributes of God
                1. Holy  (Ps. 99:9)            5. Loving  (Jer 31:3)
                2. Righteous  (Ezra 9:15)      6. Long-suffering (2 Peter 3:9)
                3. Just (Rom 22:12)            7. Gracious ( Titus 2:11)
                4. Merciful  (Isa. 55:7,8)     8. Pure (Hab. 1:13)
                                               9. Truth (I John 4:8)

        C.      Doctrine of God
                1. God the Father
                2. God the Son
                3. God the Holy Spirit

II.     Relevance of God

        A.      Purpose of God
                1. Eternal salvation
                2. Teach how to live

        B.      Importance of God in my life
                1. Direction in Life
                2. Focus of Life
                3. Stability

APPENDIX C
OUTLINE OF SESSIONS
For The Model

Subject: God
Topic: Black Theology

I.     Introduction to Black Theology

       A.     Origins of Black Theology
              1. Contemporary Black Theology began in 1960's
              2. Black Theology dates back to slavery

       B.     Significant Contributors to Black Theology
              1. James Cone
              2. J. Deotis Roberts
              3. Gayraud Wilmore

II.    What is Black Theology

       A.     An inspired effort to interpret a Christian message for the Black
              Community of Faith
       B.     Black Theology is a Theology of Black Liberation
       C.     A Theology of Blackness

III.   Importance of Black Theology

       A.     It affirms the existence of Blacks
       B.     Allows the Black Community to express their faith in God in their own
              context.
       C.     Brings hope to the oppressed.

APPENDIX C
OUTLINE OF SESSIONS
For The Model

Subject: God
Topic: Womanist Theology

I        Importance of Womanist Theology

    A.    Provides a window of opportunity
    B.    Allows women to empower themselves

II.    Purpose of Womanist Theology

    A.    To affirm women spiritually and secularly in their own context
    B.    Provide an opportunity to express themselves according to their own experience
    C.    To provide a means of doing theology for the survival and liberation of Black Women

III.    Significant Contributors to Womanist Theology

    A.    Alice Walker
    B.    Jacquelyn Grant

APPENDIX C
OUTLINE OF SESSIONS
For The Model

Subject: Self
Topic: Self

I.      Who Are You - Building Self Esteem

        A.      Reasons for Low Self Esteem

                1. Peers negatively spread to individuals
                2. Little or no confidence in youth by parents
                3. Unhappy with personal appearance
                4. Academic failure
                5. Lack of self confidence

II.     How to Build Self Esteem

        A.      Say and know who you are
        B.      Know what makes you feel good and bad about yourself
        C.      Live up to personal goals and expectations
        D.      Focus on what you have learned about yourself

III.    Importance of Self Esteem

        A.      Builds character, promotes determination and self motivation
        B.      Equips youth for effective leadership
        C.      Provides a feeling of self worth
        D.      Affects behavior

APPENDIX C
OUTLINE OF SESSIONS
For The Model

Subject: Self
Topic: Decision Making

I.      Importance of Decision Making

     A.      Decision making affects what may or may not occur in the future
     B.      Decisions should be thought though carefully
     C.      Decisions help maintain and enhance self esteem

II.     How are Decisions Made

     A.      Six steps in decision making

          1. Determine the question
          2. Examine the question
          3. Collect date and identify influence
          4. Investigate consequences
          5. Decide
          6. Evaluate

APPENDIX C
OUTLINE OF SESSIONS
For The Model

Subject:  Self
Topic:  Values & Goals

I.      What is a Value

II.     The Necessity of Values

III.    What is a Goal

IV.     Importance of Goals

        A.    Gives purpose to life
        B.    Gives meaning to life
        C.    Two types of Goals

                1. Short term
                2. Long Term

        D.    Realistic Goals
        E.    Process for Goal Setting

APPENDIX C
OUTLINE OF SESSIONS
For The Model

Subject: Community
Topic: Community

I.    Understanding your Community

    A.    Historical Nature
    B.    Cultural Background
    C.    Communities Strengths and Weaknesses
    D.    Community Leaders

II.   Motivating Factors of Community Leadership

    A.    Unsatisfied with present community conditions
    B.    Desire to see a community change
    C.    Desire the opportunity to make a difference
    D.    The idea of being recognized in the community

III.  Philosophy of Leadership

    A.    Principle centeredness
    B.    Assisting people in realizing their potential
    C.    Allowing people to utilize their talents

IV.   Characteristics of Leaders

    A.    Good Communicator
    B.    Effective Motivators
    C.    Risk Takers
    D.    Accepts Criticism
    E.    Decision Makers
    F.    Ability to Effect Change
    G.    Good Listener

*NOTE: This outline covers three sessions.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Books**

Cannon, Katie G. Black Womanist Ethics. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1988.

Cone, Cecil W. The Identity Crisis in Black Theology. Nashville, Tennessee: AMEC, 1975.

Cone, James H. Black Theology and Black Power. New York, N.Y.: Seabury Press, 1969.

_____. A Black Theology of Liberation. Philadelphia,PA: Lippencott, 1970.

_____. For My People: Black Theology and the Black Church. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1984.

Cone, James and Gayraud Wilmore. Black Theology : Vol 1 - 2. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993.

Dudley, Roger. Why Teenagers Reject Religion and What to do About It. Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978.

Foster, Charles R. Ed. and Grant Shockley. ed. Working With Black Youth: Opportunities for Christian Ministry. Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1989.

Gardner, James ed., Deotis Roberts, ed.. Quest for a Black Theology. Philadelphia, PA: Pilgrim Press, 1971.

Grant, Jacquelyn, White Women's Christ and Black Woman's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1989.

Goba, Banganjalo, An agenda for Black Theology: Hermeneutics for Social Change. Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1988.

Hopkins, Dwight ed., George C. L. Cummings Ed., Cut Loose Your Stammering Tongue: Black Theology in the Slave Narratives. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991.

Hopkins, Dwight H. Black Theology USA and South Africa: Politics, Culture and Liberation. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1989.

_____. Shoes that Fit Our Feet: Sources for A Constructive Black Theology. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993.

Jemison, T. H. Christian Beliefs. Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1959.

Jones, Major J. Christian Ethics for Black Theology. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974.

_____. The Color of God. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1987.

Kunjufu, Jawanza. Motivating and Preparing Black Youth for Success. Chicago, Illinois: African American Images, 1986.

Myers, William. Black and While Styles of Youth Ministry: Two Congregations in America. New York: Pilgrim Press, 1991.

Roberts, J. Deotis. Black Theology Today: Liberation and Contextualization. New York: E. Mellen Press,1983.

Saunders, Cheryl. ed. Living the Intersection: Womanist and Afrocentrism in Theology. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

Stommen, Merton P., Five Cries of Youth. New York: Harper and Row Publishing, 1974.

Townes, Emilie Maureen, Womanist Justice, Womanist Home. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1993.

_____, A Troubling In My Soul. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993.

Weems, Renita J.,Just A Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible. San Diego, California: Lura Media, 1988.

White, Ellen G. Messages to Young People. Washington D.C., Review & Herald Publishing Association.

Williams, Delores S., Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenges of Womanist God-Talk. Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1993.

## Commentaries

Exell, Joseph, The Biblical Illustrator. Grand Rapids Michigan, Baker Book House

Weirsbe, Warren, <u>Expository Outlines on the Old Testament</u>: Covington, Kentucky: Calvary Book Room, 1968.


**Articles**

Conn, Harvie M, ed, "Ministries to City Children and Youth," <u>Urban Mission</u>  9 (March 1992) 3 - 61.

Little, Sara P, ed,  "Youth and Youth Ministry," <u>Affirmation</u> 2 (Spring 1989) 1- 105, 119.

McLean, Stuart D., "Rite of Passage Youth Ministry: An Alternative," <u>Affirmation</u> 2 (Spring 1989) 97 - 105.

Myers, Bill, "Intentional Youth Ministry: Two Models," <u>Chicago Theological Seminary Register</u> 76 No 3 (Fall 1986) 49-58.

Myers, William R., "Church in the World: Models of Youth Ministry," <u>Theology Today</u> 44 (April 1987) 103 - 110.

Weld, Wayne C, ed, "Life and Ministry in the Parish." <u>Covenant Quarterly</u> 51:3-37, (May   1993).

Wiley, Chris, "Toward a New Vision for Urban Youth Ministry," <u>Urban Mission</u> 9 (March 1992) 6- 16.


**Dissertations**

Adams, Buford, H., "A Model for Effective Church Youth Ministry," (Columbia Theological Seminary  1993).

Bright, Thomas, J.,  "Enabling Peer Leadership in Youth Ministry: A Retreat Model," (Boston University School of Theology 1983).

Orphe, Martha M., "Concerning Multi-cultural Urban Youth Ministry: A Womanist Perspective," (Wesley Theological Seminary, 1993).

## Essays

Benson, Warren S, "A  Theology of Youth Ministry," <u>Complete Book of Youth Ministry;</u>    <u>III</u>, eds) 1987 pp15-35.


Borgman, Dean, "A History of American Youth Ministry," <u>Complete Book of Youth Ministry</u>; W. Benson & M. Senter, III eds. 1987, pp 61-74.

Christie, Les, "Developing Leadership Potential In Youth: Motivating youth for Ministry," <u>Complete Book of Youth Ministry</u>; W. Benson & M. Senter, III eds. 1987 pp 181-197.

Myers, William R., "Models for Urban Youth Ministry: Goals, Styles and Contexts," <u>Urban Church Education</u>, pp127-134

## Yearbooks

Children's Defense Fund, <u>A Black Community Crusade And Covenant For Protecting Children</u>, 1995.Washington D.C.

Children's Defense Fund. <u>The State of Americas Children Yearbook 1994</u>, Washington, D.C.